**UNITED NATIONS** **S**

**Security Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/656
16 July 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 16 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to draw your attention to another act of infiltration into the territory of the Republic of Korea by at least one armed agent of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, whose body was found on 12 July 1998. As you may recall, I requested your attention to a similar act of infiltration by a North Korean submarine caught on 22 June 1998 in the territorial waters of the Republic of Korea in my letter of 2 July 1998 (S/1998/607).

On 12 July 1998, around 0920 hours local time, a body clad in a diving suit was found on a beach near Tonghae, an east coast city of the Republic of Korea, 90 km south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ). Along with the body were found a Czech-made submachine gun, hand grenades, a transmission device and other equipment typically used for infiltration by North Korean agents. A semi-submersible torpedo-like propellant designed to carry infiltrating agents was also found nearby.

A special investigative team of the Government of the Republic of Korea has concluded from the evidence gathered at the site that the dead body was that of a North Korean agent belonging to the operational detachment of the North Korean Workers' Party, which was also responsible for the recent act of submarine infiltration.

This incident constitutes yet another serious act of provocation by North Korea, in clear violation of the 1953 Armistice Agreement and the 1992 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and the North. It is deeply regrettable that such an act of provocation has recurred, even as the United Nations Command-Korean People's Army officers' meeting is still dealing with the previous incident of submarine infiltration. My Government has already returned to North Korea the bodies of the nine crew members found dead in that submarine, out of humanitarian considerations.

Such repeated acts of provocation perpetrated by North Korea contradict its assurances that such an incident would not recur in the future, as provided in the statement on 29 December 1996, following the earlier incident of submarine infiltration in September 1996. We are deeply concerned that these acts of

provocation, if continued, could undermine the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula.

The Government of the Republic of Korea strongly urges the North Korean authorities, once again, to renounce all acts of military provocation against the Republic of Korea. We demand that the North acknowledge its responsibility and take appropriate measures, including making a public apology, punishing those responsible for these acts of provocation and promising that such acts will not recur in the future.

For your reference, I wish to enclose a copy of the statements issued by the Ministry of National Defence, on 12 July 1998, and the National Security Council of the Republic of Korea, on 15 July 1998 (see annexes I and II).

I would be grateful if you would have this letter and the attached documents circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) LEE See-young
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Statement of 12 July 1998 of the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Korea on North Korea's armed provocation

After thoroughly analysing the body of the armed commando found wearing a diving suit in Tonghae, Kangwon Province, at approximately 0920 hours on 12 July 1998, the joint investigation team concluded that the commando was clearly on an armed infiltration mission from North Korea.

Such provocation by North Korea is yet another clear violation of the Armistice Agreement and a serious military provocation, following the infiltration incident involving a submarine and commandos in Kangneung, on 18 September 1996, and another incursion by a North Korean submarine on 22 June 1998.

In the statement issued at the time of the recent submarine incursion, the Ministry of National Defence demanded that North Korea acknowledge its provocation, punish those responsible and assure that similar incidents will not recur in the future. The Ministry, as well as the entire Korean people, cannot hide their profound indignation and shock that North Korea made such an outrageous military provocation at this point, when discussion on the similar incident is still under way between the two sides in the General Officers' meeting at Panmunjom.

We once again urge North Korea to stop all of its reckless armed provocations in breach of the Armistice Agreement and we sternly warn that we will not tolerate any further provocative actions.

Annex II

National Security Council of the Republic of Korea
resolution 1998-1 of 15 July 1998

North Korea continues to pose a grave security threat to the Republic of Korea by committing various acts of provocation, while steadfastly maintaining its policy to communize the South despite the Government of the Republic of Korea's policy of engagement towards the Pyongyang regime to facilitate reconciliation and cooperation and to promote peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

Against this background, the National Security Council confirmed that the infiltration incidents of the North Korean midget submarine in the East Coast and its armed agent in Mook-ho as serious acts of provocation, which constitute a breach of both the Armistice Agreement and the South-North Basic Agreement.

The Council, after assessing the North's policy towards the South, re-evaluating the unified readiness posture of the civil-government-military defence system and after considering various response measures towards the North, including diplomatic actions, has decided as follows:

1. North Korea should immediately cease all acts of provocation that threaten the peace on the Korean Peninsula. Specifically, it must take measures acceptable to our people by acknowledging that the recent infiltration incidents are in violation of the Armistice Agreement and the South-North Basic Agreement, making an apology, punishing those responsible for those incidents and taking measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

In order to realize our just claims, the Government of the Republic of Korea will strongly urge the North to take sincere efforts in this regard through various channels including General Officers' talks in Panmunjom, international organizations and cooperation with friendly nations.

2. Amidst continuing provocation from the North, in order to strengthen our military readiness and enlist the support of the general public, the Government of the Republic of Korea will:

(a) Reinforce its maritime and coastal alertness posture and formulate and execute an integrated preparedness plan;

(b) Strengthen military cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America to deter armed provocation and improve our counter-infiltration capability;

(c) Facilitate the operation of the central and local Integrated Defense Committees and establish the Civilian Reporting System to reorganize and reinforce a regional civil-government-military defence posture in rear areas.

3. The Government of the Republic of Korea will continue to pursue the three principles of its North Korea policy, with a view to improving inter-Korean

relations and materializing peace, reconciliation and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula:

(a) We will never tolerate armed provocation of any kind;

(b) We do not have any intention to undermine or absorb North Korea;

(c) We will actively pursue reconciliation and cooperation between the South and the North, as stipulated in the South-North Basic Agreement.

Considering the complexity of the current situation, the Government of the Republic of Korea will continue to maintain a robust security posture and to promote exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North. We also reaffirm that only a strong security posture will prepare the ground for reconciliation and cooperation, while improvement in inter-Korean relations through reconciliation and cooperation will reduce threats on the Korean Peninsula.

---